

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 remain in this application. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

The claim amendments above are made following consideration of the comments provided by the Examiner in the initial paragraphs on page 2 of the Office Action. It is respectfully submitted that the claims of this application are now in proper form and that the claim objections set forth by the Examiner are eliminated.

Independent claims 1 and 21 are rejected, along with various other claims depending on claim 1, as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 2,920,920 to Couse et al. Reconsideration is requested. The Couse et al. ('920) building structure has expansion element panels that are either hinged to each other or hinged to a base container, and thus lacks a box-shaped expansion element that can be extended as specified and that includes a floor panel, a front panel, and two side panels in permanently fixed positions relative to each other as claims 1 and 21 presently require. By way of the features noted, a container according to the present invention does not change its shape during the overall expansion process.

These claims also require the container of the present invention to include a device with which the box-shaped expansion element can be lowered such that, during expansion, the floor panel remains horizontal. The Couse et al. ('920) building structure, by contrast, is a construction in which expansion element floors are swung from a vertical position into a horizontal position. The roof

panel of the expansion element is connected to the roof of the base container only after the expansion process is completed. Prior to this time, including while expansion occurs, that roof panel can be freely swung around the horizontal axis located at the upper edge of the front panel of the expansion element. Opposite edges of the Couse et al. ('920) expansion element roof panel are hingedly connected to the roof of the base container and to one edge of an expansion element side panel permanently before, during, and after expansion.

By way of the features now reflected in claims 1 and 21, the lengths of seals necessary to close off the inside space of a container from the outside is made relatively short. The Couse et al. ('920) configuration, by contrast, uses numerous hinges, which are not air tight and must be sealed, arranged between pairs of adjacent panels. A container according to the present invention, however, has superior load-bearing characteristics in both extended and unextended states, and is thus particularly suitable for use in sea transport, during which containers may be stacked in up to 10 layers.

It is respectfully submitted that the amendments above overcome the rejection of claims 1 and 21 as being anticipated by the Couse et al. ('920) patent. U.S. Patent 2,765,499 to Couse et al. is relied on as a secondary reference in combination with the Couse et al. ('920) patent to reject claims 3, 6, 8-12, 15, and 17-19. The Couse et al. ('499) patent, however, fails to suggest modifying the Couse et al. ('920) structure so as to meet the limitations now appearing in claims 1 and 21 and discussed above, and claims 1 and 21 above are considered

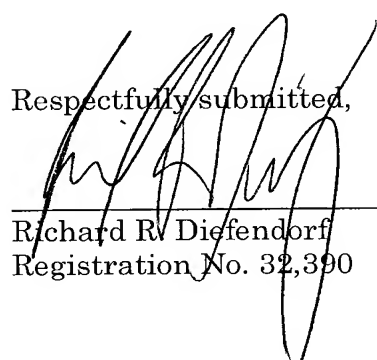
patentable. The rest of the claims in this application are dependent claims incorporating the limitations of claim 1 and are considered patentable as well.

This application should now be in allowable condition. If there are any questions regarding this Reply or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an extension of time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #101280.52841US).

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Respectfully submitted,



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